## Process Flow Overview

SFA HR Automation

**Classification:**

Primary Functionality: Payroll Administration & Personnel Management

Sub-function: Payroll system management (Death)

☑ "As-Is"
☐ "To-Be"

**Description:**

This "As-Is" flow provides an overview of the death process. The process is semi-automated through the use of Federal Personnel/Payroll System (FPPS), Economic System Inc. (ESI), and Federal Retirement Calculations (FRC Calc). The Employee Relations team at HRG computes the death benefits calculation for the survivors/beneficiaries once the employee's death is confirmed. SFA HR initiates and forwards the personnel action to HRG for processing. The Employee Relations team sends a sympathy letter and applicable forms to the survivors/beneficiaries. The survivors/beneficiaries complete and return the forms to the Employee Relations team for compiling and forwarding to OPM via NBC in Denver.

**Handoffs:**

There are 9 handoffs in the "As-Is" death process flow. Handoffs occur between: Employee Relations Specialist - SFA HR, SFA HR - Employee Relations Specialist, Employee Relations Specialist - survivors/beneficiaries, survivors/beneficiaries - Employee Relations Specialist, Employee Relations Specialist - A&R Technician, A&R Technician - Customer Service Team III Leader, Customer Service Team III Leader - A&R Technician, A&R Technician - Employee Relations Specialist, and Employee Relations Specialist - SFA HR.

**Average Process Completion Time:**

The average process completion time for processing a death case is seven days, excluding the 5-60 days it takes the survivors and beneficiaries to return the completed forms and notarized death certificate to HRG.

| Position title | Agency name | Time/ request | Number of positions | Percent of time/year | Number processed/year |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Employee Relations Specialist | HRG | 9 hrs. | 2 | 2% | 8* |
| Customer Service Team III Leader | HRG | 5 min. | 1 | Less than 1 | 8* |
| Management Operations Specialist | SFA HR | 15 min. | 2 | Less than 1 | 1* |
| Admin Officer | SFA | 30 min. | 7 | Less than 1 | 1* |
| A&R Technician | HRG | 15 min. | 1 | Less than 1 | 8* |

* Includes deaths in the regions

**Cost:**

- HRG inter-agency agreement for use of FPPS: $230,000 annually
- FPPS: $165 per W-2 form annually
- ESI: $175 per license for annual updates and support services (excludes initial cost of ~$700)
- FRC Calc: $285 per license for annual updates and support services (excludes initial cost of ~$1,000)
- SFA-sponsored FTEs: ~$255,543 (based on 3 FTEs at an average OM salary of $85,181)

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**Assumptions:**

- The process flow assumes that all forms submitted by the survivors or beneficiaries are complete. If certain parts of the form(s) are not filled in, the Employee Relations Specialist will return the form(s) to the survivor or beneficiary to complete and resubmit.
- The death process flow assumes that the SF 50 is accurate. If the Customer Service Team III Leader detects an error in the printed SF 50, then the Customer Service Team III Leader completes an error sheet and returns the SF 50 to the Employee Relations Specialist to make the necessary changes.
- Page 6.6.3 states that the Employee Relations Specialist sends an unpaid compensation form, a life insurance form, and a thrift savings plan form to the survivors/beneficiaries. These process steps assume that the deceased employee had unpaid compensation, life insurance and a thrift savings plan account. The Employee Relations Specialist sends these forms only if they are applicable to the employee's death case.
- The death process flow assumes that both survivors and beneficiaries are entitled to the deceased employee's benefits. The Employee Relations Specialist sends applicable forms to the survivors and/or beneficiaries as indicated by the employee by the designation of beneficiary forms.
- The death process flow assumes that the Employee Relations Specialist requests the employee's Official Personnel Folder (OPF) from HRG's Records section during the death calculation process. The Employee Relations Specialist would, therefore, already have the OPF to use throughout the rest of the death process.

**Exclusions:**

- The death calculation process was not mapped because every calculation will be different from the next depending upon the deceased employee's experience, years of service, retirement system, etc. The many variables make it difficult to illustrate a typical death calculation. The Retirement Calculation & Retirement Counseling flow (5.6.0-5.6.10) can be used as a reference because the Employee Relations team uses FRC Calc software to compute both types of calculations. When calculating death benefits, the Employee Relations Specialist selects 'death calculation' instead of 'voluntary retirement.' A different set of questions follows the 'death calculation' selection, but many of the same screens could apply to both a death and retirement calculation such as computing a high-3 year average salary or computing the service computation date.

**Regions:**

- The regional offices follow a slightly different procedure for processing personnel actions; refer to the Regional Process: Requesting Personnel Actions sheet for details.
- The death process is similar in the regions and in headquarters. The main difference is that the regional offices operate with a smaller staff that typically includes one Personnel Officer and one Personnel Specialist. HR employees in the regions are generalists, which means that they perform all HR functions rather than specialists in headquarters that only handle matters related to Employee Relations, Labor Relations, etc. Because there are less people involved in executing HR functions, there are fewer handoffs in the regions.
- One notable difference is that HR employees in the regions do not offer to make house visits to help survivors or beneficiaries complete the necessary forms. Like in headquarters though, survivors and beneficiaries can make an appointment with HR for assistance in completing the forms. HR employees in the regions are also available to answer questions over the phone.
- Another difference between regions and headquarters is that the regions do not have access to Economic System Inc. (ESI) software. Instead of using this software, regional HR employees manually fill out the Certified Summary of Federal Service, the Agency Checklist for Immediate Retirement, and the Agency Certification of Insurance Status.

**Strategic Direction:**

SFA HR can use the death process flow to gain a better understanding of how deaths are processed at HRG. After analyzing this process flow, SFA HR will be able to make an educated decision about whether or not they should bring this function in-house. If SFA HR decides that HRG should continue to perform this function, SFA HR could use the death process flow to help write a strategic service-level agreement with specific guidelines to meet their needs.